THE DEAD ZONE

"INDEPENDENCE DAY"

Production #14-4014

Written by
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DEAD ZONE: "Independence Day" - CAST & SETS - 6/6/05 - PINK

THE DEAD ZONE

"INDEPENDENCE DAY"

CAST

JOHNNY SMITH
BRUCE LEWIS

TRUCK STOP DINER WAITRESS
JAKE PHILIPS
DENISE
HANK
GRIM
BIKER #1
BRIAN GRIFFITH *
NIKKI GRIFFITH *
MARVIN FELPS/FAKE OFFICER MASSEY
ICE CREAM TRUCK DRIVER
OLDIES RADIO DISC JOCKEY (V.O. ONLY)
REAL OFFICER J. MASSEY (1 LINE)
MOURNING WOMAN/MRS. PHILIPS (1 LINE)
FARMER (1 LINE)
SCRAPNY MAN/MOTORIST (1 LINE)

NON-SPEAKING

TRUCK STOP DINER PATRONS
BIKERS #2 & #3
TEENAGERS #2, #3 & #4
MOURNING MAN/MR. PHILIPS & OTHER FUNERAL GOERS
YOUNG BOY, YOUNG GIRL & OTHER ASSORTED MOTORISTS
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THE DEAD ZONE

“INDEPENDENCE DAY”

SETS

INTERIORS
TRUCK STOP DINER
VARIOUS VEHICLE INTERIORS
HOSPITAL E.R.
WAITING ROOM

EXTERIORS
TRUCK STOP DINER PARKING LOT
I-95 MOVING GRIDLOCK “BAYVILLE ROAD” EXIT
FARM
HIGHWAY ROADSIDE
STATE PRISON
* (NOTE: NO MORE RAIN, THUNDER)

ANIMALS

VEHICLES
BRUCE’S NISSAN MURANO (DENTED & CRASHED)
THE GRIFFITHS’ HIPPY RECREATIONAL VEHICLE
DENISE’S CAR
TEENAGERS’ JEEP
HANK & GRIM’S WHITE PICKUP TRUCK
MASSEY’S STATE POLICE CRUISER
REFRIGERATED CUBE (ICE CREAM) TRUCK
ASSORTED AMBULANCE, EMERGENCY & POLICE VEHICLES
ASSORTED OTHER VEHICLES STUCK IN TRAFFIC
OLD FARM PICKUP TRUCK
THE DEAD ZONE

"INDEPENDENCE DAY"

TEASER

FADE IN:

CLOSE ON a weathered light box rotating uneasily atop a rusty pole; HAPPY B-DAY AMERICA spelled out in crooked letters. SLOWLY PULL BACK to reveal the...

EXT. TOMMY'S DINER - DAY - ESTABLISHING

The quintessential American truck stop. A scorching July sun assaults the dusty parking lot. We FIND Bruce's Nissan Murano.

DISC JOCKEY (O.S.)

Happy fourth, friends and neighbors. Two hundred thirty and the old girl's still kickin'...

INT. TOMMY'S DINER - CONTINUOUS - CLOSE ON A RADIO

An ancient solid-state transistor; crappy speakers...

DISC JOCKEY (O.S.)

This is Jammin' Jack, keepin' you hoppin' and boppin' to the music that helped make us the land of the free, home of the brave and birthplace of the five dollar cup'a coffee! It's one o'clock and it's time to be good... Johnny B. Goode. This is Chuck Berry!

A HAND SWITCHES THE RADIO OFF just as the music is about to kick in. We PICK UP a young, attractive WAITRESS (25), MOVING through the hustle and bustle of the lunch crowd, balancing full plates above her head...

FINDING JOHNNY and BRUCE in a corner booth. Presenting Bruce with a ridiculously oversized burger.

WAITRESS

Double bacon chili cheeseburger and fries for tall, dark, and handsome.

Sliding a diminutive salad over to Johnny.

WAITRESS

Garden salad, dressing on the side for blondie. So, where you boys headed?

(CONTINUED)
JOHNNY
Harborfest.

BRUCE
Biggest fireworks display on the East Coast.

WAITRESS
(smiling at Johnny)
Sounds like fun. Maybe I'll head over with one of my girlfriends after work.

She lingers a beat, then realizing he's not taking the bait, sets the check down on the table.

WAITRESS
(dejected)
You can pay at the counter.

She walks away. Johnny dives into his salad under Bruce's incredulous gaze, finally...

JOHNNY
What?

BRUCE
What? She was totally into you.

JOHNNY
(oblivious)
She was?

Bruce shakes his head.

BRUCE
Y'know, you might be able to see everything, but sometimes you are completely blind. Come to think, she reminds me of a girl I used to date in high school.

JOHNNY
Yeah?

BRUCE
/remembers fondly/
Marsha Harris. Man, that poor girl was crazy about me. Took her to the Junior prom.
(confident)
A night she never forgot.

They both reach for the napkin dispenser at the same
moment; their hands connecting. We hear a WHOOSH!

    JOHNNY
    Is that right?

Johnny can't help but smile.
BRUCE
What's so funny?

A decisive beat. Johnny relents, the opportunity ripe...

JOHNNY
I was just wondering which part of the prom you think Marsha remembers most? Your Mom drivin' you guys around in the family station wagon or you comin' up short on the good-night kiss?

Johnny enjoys the moment. Bruce is mortified. He sets down the burger, rising to his feet.

BRUCE
I'll get the check.

JOHNNY
You barely took a bite.

BRUCE
Lost my appetite.

Bruce walks off. Johnny is left holding his fork...

EXT. TOMMY'S DINER - MOMENTS LATER - MOVING WITH BRUCE

as he stomps through the parking lot; Johnny trails a half step behind.

JOHNNY
Come on... I was only kidding. So you were a late bloomer. I missed my prom with the flu. Sarah still hasn't forgiven me.

Bruce stops in his tracks, spinning on Johnny.

BRUCE
It's not about the prom, it's about you and me. You think it's hard being a psychic? Try being a psychic's best friend. That's hard.

(MORE)
BRUCE (CONT'D)
I mean, it'd be nice to spend just one day without you peeking inside my head.

JOHNNY
Alright.

Bruce's scowl ebbs.

BRUCE
Alright?

JOHNNY
You're off limits for the next 24 hours, you've got my word.

Johnny offers his hand.

Bruce hesitates, then shakes. Something O.S. draws his concern...

BRUCE
You can't be serious!!

JOHNNY
What's wrong?

REVERSE ON THE MURANO

a large dent in the front fender; fresh white paint imbedded in the metal.

RESUME ON BRUCE

He scans the lot; the perpetrator long gone.

BRUCE
Some jerk smashes into my car and he doesn't leave note or anything. What is wrong with people today?

Johnny steps to the fender, surveying the damage.

JOHNNY
It's not so bad.
CONTINUED: (2)

CLOSE ON THE FENDER

Johnny floats his palm across the damage... WHOOSH!

INT. MURANO - VISION

The car has been CRASHED, the windshield shattered. Observer Johnny, steps up to the open passenger window, as he glances over to SEE Bruce crushed down in the driver seat, still gripping the broken steering wheel; his gaze locked ahead. There's a SURREAL quality to everything, like TIME HAS SLOWED DOWN and SOUND ECHOES.

Bruce slowly turns to him... a trickle of blood escapes the corner of his mouth. Two similar streams materialize from his nostrils. His eyes flicker as he eases back in the seat, taking a final strained breath as he passes away...

Observer Johnny looks to his right, spotting an EXIT SIGN that reads, "BAYVILLE ROAD EXIT"...

RESUME - EXT. PARKING LOT - ON JOHNNY

Johnny flashes out, rattled to the core by the vision. Bruce is still checking out his bumper.

BRUCE
I don't see any other damage.
(checks his watch)
Oh, dude, we are seriously behind schedule.

JOHNNY
Bruce I just had a vision...

Bruce reacts, both hands going up; halting Johnny in his tracks.

BRUCE
If it's about me, or my car, I don't want to hear it. You gave me your word.

JOHNNY
But...

BRUCE
(adamant)
But nothing. Deal's a deal.

Johnny hesitates, trapped. Then...
CONTINUED:

JOHNNY
Alright, but I'm driving.

Bruce shoots Johnny an incredulous stare. Johnny is resolute; his hand outstretched.

BRUCE
As long as we get on the road.

He tosses Johnny his keys and moves to get in the passenger seat.

Johnny palms the keys, gripping them tight. No vision. He reacts with disappointment.

Bruce looks back from beside the passenger side door...

BRUCE
You comin'?

JOHNNY
Yeah, I'm comin'.

FADE OUT.

END OF TEASER
ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY - ESTABLISHING

Moderate traffic moves at a steady clip. FIND the Murano, limping along the slow lane; cars and trucks zooming by.

INT. MURANO - CONTINUOUS - ON BRUCE

watching with frustration as endless vehicles eclipse them. Shifting his attention to Johnny at the controls.

BRUCE
Dude, you think we can try and make it before July fourth of next year?

Johnny's preoccupied with the Teaser Vision; lost in his own thoughts. Bruce watches him, annoyed.

JOHNNY
(snapping back)
Huh?

BRUCE
It'd be nice if we get to the harbor today.

JOHNNY
I'm doing the speed limit.

Bruce reaches for the radio, fiddling with the controls...

CLOSE ON THE RADIO

The digital display scans through available frequencies. The first three attempts returning STATIC, then...

DISC JOCKEY (O.S.)
That was Pete Townsend and the boys with "Summertime Blues", wrapping up a thirty-minute commercial-free music sweep. One fifteen in the PM. Time for a Jammin' Jack's traffic update.

(MORE)
DISC JOCKEY (O.S.) (CONT'D)
Looks like smooth sailin'... unless you're headin' towards Boston on Interstate ninety five. It's a parking lot out there...

Bruce reacts, killing the volume.

BRUCE'S POV - ROAD SIGN
I-95.

RESUME SCENE
As he watches it shoot past them.

BRUCE
Did he say I-95 to Boston?

JOHNNY
That's what he said.

BRUCE
We have to get off this road.

JOHNNY
That might be a problem.

POV THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD
An endless sea of brake lights ahead. Multiple lanes of traffic crawling to an eventual standstill. GRIDLOCK.

RESUME SCENE
Bruce stares out the window in disgust.

BRUCE
Could this day get any worse?

Johnny considers the question, then...

JOHNNY
Listen, I really need to tell you about the vision I had.
BRUCE
I told you I'm not interested.
Whatever it is, I'm sure you'll
set it right. Just let it die.

JOHNNY
(sotto)
That's what I'm afraid of.

BRUCE
What's that supposed to mean?

JOHNNY
I saw you in a car accident.
(beat)
A bad one.

BRUCE
How bad?

JOHNNY
Bad as it gets.

Bruce tries to let it register.

JOHNNY
I'm sorry. I had to tell you.

A beat.

BRUCE
How does it happen?

JOHNNY
I don't know. I've been touching
the inside of the car, but I just
keep seeing the same thing over
and over.

BRUCE
(tortured beat)
Damn.

JOHNNY
Don't worry. We'll figure this
out. In the vision you were
driving, so we'll just make sure
you don't get behind the wheel.

BRUCE
Right. I just need to stay calm.
Keep cool.

We PAN OVER to the dash mounted clock... 1:20PM.
CONTINUED: (3)

The minutes tick away before our eyes, as we TIME LAPSE jumping ahead to 2:00PM.

NEW ANGLE

Johnny and Bruce sit in awkward silence.

    BRUCE
    (smashes the dash)
    THIS IS GODDAMN RIDICULOUS!

    JOHNNY
    What happen to keeping cool?

The engine suddenly SPUTTERS.

    BRUCE
    What was that?

    JOHNNY
    (re: the gauges)
    Engine's starting to overheat.
    (MORE)
CONTINUED:

JOHNNY (CONT'D)
Must be the air conditioning. I
better turn the engine off.

Johnny kills the motor, simultaneously stifling the flow
of cold air into the cabin. Another beat of silence.

JOHNNY
Maybe we should get some fresh
air. Stretch our legs.

Bruce stares off. Preoccupied. Annoyed.

BRUCE
I'm staying right here. Thanks
to you, I got a few issues to
work out.

Johnny reaches for the door handle, then remembers and
takes the car keys with him.

JOHNNY
Just in case.

He shoots Bruce a comforting smile and gets out...

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME TIME - MOVING THROUGH

the virtual parking lot. Many MOTORISTS have left the
confines of their vehicles; milling about...

A foursome of TEENAGERS pile out of an open JEEP. JAKE
PHILIPS (18) cocks back a football...

JAKE
Go long!

As he fires a spiral, we PAN OVER to FIND a gorgeous woman
in a bikini top and shorts, DENISE (30) spreading a beach
towel across the hood of her car. She hops up and proceeds
to smear suntan lotion on her bronzed legs and stomach...

A NEW ANGLE

reveals two plaid-clad country boys, HANK (40) and GRIM
(35), sitting on the tailgate of a battered white pickup
truck, sipping beers; leering at Denise.

HANK
Not bad.

GRIM
Not bad at all.

Nearby, a trio of girthy BIKERS, cloaked in black leather,
lean on their respective 3-WHEEL MOTORTRIKES; shooting
the shit.

(CONTINUED)
BIKER #1
How do you know if you're a real
hillbilly?
(beat)
Your house has more miles on it
than your car.

The bikers laugh heartily. A young BOY and GIRL run past,
trailing sparklers in their hands. We STAY WITH them as
they weave in and out of cars, right past...

JOHNNY
drinking in his new surroundings.

BRIAN (O.S.)
Dude! Watch out!

Johnny reacts, turning. His eyes go wide..

REVERSE

BRIAN GRIFFITH (28) races towards Johnny on an oversized
skateboard. They collide... nearly knocking Johnny over.
Brian wears a well worn KILLRADIO tee shirt.

BRIAN
Sorry man. Still gettin' the
hang of this thing.

JOHNNY
No harm done.

Brian's expression suddenly changes, recognition sets in.

BRIAN
Whoa. You're Johnny Smith.

JOHNNY
Have we met?

BRIAN
No, not officially. I'm Brian.
We're big fans.

JOHNNY
We?
BRIAN
Nikki. My wife.
(realizing)
Oh, dude, you have to meet her.
It'll blow her mind.

JOHNNY
I really should get back...

BRUCE (O.S.)
What's the rush?

Johnny turns to find Bruce standing behind him.

JOHNNY
Thought you were staying put?

BRUCE
You kidding? It's like an oven
in there. And you took the keys.

BRIAN
She's right over there in our
camper. It'd be a real honor.

BRUCE
Of course he'll go. Johnny Smith
never disappoints a fan.

BRIAN
Awesome!

Off Johnny's look at Bruce...

JOHNNY
(to Bruce)
You coming?

Bruce has locked his eyes on the woman in the bikini
sunbathing on her car's hood.

BRUCE
Think I'll check out the
neighborhood. Use my time
productively. What I got left.

He walks away.

BRIAN
Your friend seemed kind'a fried.

JOHNNY
He just got some bad news about
his car.
BRIAN
Bummer.

JOHNNY
Yeah.

Johnny watches Bruce walk away.
EXT. RECREATIONAL VEHICLE - MOMENTS LATER

A run-down, hand-painted recreation vehicle; a flower and rainbow motif.

INT. RECREATIONAL VEHICLE - CONTINUOUS

NIKKI GRIFFITH (25) abundantly pregnant; lounges on a futon, perusing a magazine. Wearing a tie-dyed maternity dress, a daisy crown riding atop her head. The RV's furnishings are decidedly retro, right down to the shag carpet. She looks up as...

The side door opens to reveal Brian...

BRIAN

Baby, are you dressed? I got somebody you need to meet.

NIKKI

Brian, I'm trying to...

(TURNS, stunned)

Oh my God! No way!

REVERSE

Johnny enters behind a beaming Brian.

BRIAN

Can you believe it? It's really him.

NIKKI

/starstruck*/

This is such an incredible honor. Brian and I have every article ever written about you.

JOHNNY

You do?

BRIAN

We're way into the whole spiritual nature of the cosmos thing. Man versus Nature.

Johnny nods, but isn't sure what this guy's talking about.

NIKKI

You probably already knew that... being you. Hey, why don't you sit down? We got plenty of room.

Johnny hesitates, looking back; searching futilely for an out. He finally relents; uncomfortable...

JOHNNY

Maybe just for a minute.
Johnny sits across from the young couple. They stare back at him, mesmerized. An awkward scenario as they launch rapid-fire inquiries....

NIKKI
So, do you see your visions in black and white or in color?

JOHNNY
Well...

BRIAN
Is there sound?

NIKKI
Stereo.

BRIAN
Surround!

They smile at each other as they are clearly loving this.

JOHNNY
It's not exactly like that...

NIKKI
Can you tell how something's gonna' turn out? Like if there's going to be a happy ending?

JOHNNY
Happy ending?

Brian and Nikki share a conspiratorial look.

BRIAN
We don't mean to be rude or anything, but would you mind?

Nikki lifts her baggy t-shirt exposing her very ripe belly. Johnny's taken aback by such a personal gesture.

JOHNNY
Gee, I don't know...

NIKKI
We just wanna' know if everything's cool with the little one.
CONTINUED:

BRIAN
Nikki gets these feeling sometimes. Like when something bad is going to happen.

NIKKI
Not like you.

BRIAN
It would sure make us feel better.

Johnny hesitates, but the look on their faces is too much for him to ignore.

JOHNNY
I guess I could give it a try.

The young husband and wife take each other's hand, then...

CLOSE ON NIKKI'S STOMACH

Johnny's fingers hover over her belly. Gentle contact... WHOOSH!

MATCH, MOVE, PAN...

Nikki screams in tremendous pain, a blood curdling shriek. Sweat pours down her ashen face. Her breathing strained and uneven. Intense labor underway... still in the RV, still stuck in traffic.

NIKKI
(excruciating pain)
There's something wrong! There's something wrong with my baby!

RESUME SCENE ON JOHNNY

Johnny is emotionally rocked as he flashes out of the vision...

NIKKI
Well?

BRIAN
Is everything alright?

Two sets of expectant eyes locked on him. Johnny musters a reassuring smile... 

(CONTINUED)
JOHNNY
Yeah, everything looks... cool.

BRIAN
I told you it was gonna be fine.
NIKKI
I love you, baby.

BRIAN
I love you, too.

Brian and Nikki smile and kiss; concerns assuaged. They evolve into a passionate kiss. Off Johnny's look as he feels like a third wheel at a make-out session...

BRUCE (O.S.)
It's called the sciatic nerve...

EXT. HIGHWAY - CONTINUOUS

Bruce has connected with Denise; the sunbathing beauty. She repeatedly mists herself with a spray bottle.

BRUCE
It runs from the lower spine all the way down to the bottom of the feet.

DENISE
Amazing.
(beat)
Oh, I'm Denise.

BRUCE
Bruce.

They shake hands, a mutual spark or two.

INCLUDE JOHNNY

A man on a mission as he pulls Bruce a few steps aside.

JOHNNY
We have to talk.

BRUCE
Is it about me? Maybe some good news?

JOHNNY
Not this time.

BRUCE
Then I'm kinda' busy.

He smiles back at Denise.

(CONTINUED)
JOHNNY
It's important. I need your cell phone.

BRUCE
Why?

JOHNNY
Can I just have it?

Bruce goes to dig the phone from his pocket, as...

DENISE
It won't work.

They both look back at her.

JOHNNY
Excuse me?

She holds up her own phone.

DENISE
There's no signal. It's like we're in some kind of... dead zone.

Johnny and Bruce exchange a knowing look.

BRUCE
What's going on?

JOHNNY
I met a girl. She's pregnant.

BRUCE
Pregnant? You were only over there for ten minutes.

JOHNNY
Very funny. I think she might go into labor any second.

BRUCE
Out here?

JOHNNY
Exactly.

BRUCE
(thinks, then)
Maybe they can drive out on the shoulder of the road.

(CONTINUED)
DENISE
Impossible.

They look back at her again.

DENISE
The shoulder is too narrow for a car, plus there's drainage pipes every hundred yards. I checked.
Johnny hands Bruce his phone, opening the Murano's passenger door; stepping up onto the seat for a better view.

**BRUCE**  
Hey! Watch the leather!


**JOHNNY**  
Keep trying 911.

**BRUCE**  
Where are you going?

**JOHNNY**  
To find somebody who can help.

He takes off through the parked cars. SHOT HOLDS on Bruce.

**WITH JOHNNY**  
TRACKING through traffic. Traversing a maze of immobile vehicles and random MOTORISTS, until he reaches a...

**POLICE CRUISER - HIGHWAY PATROL**  
landlocked by the traffic; another victim of the congestion. Johnny rounds the driver's side -- the car is empty. As he peers in through the window...

**MASSEY (O.S.)**  
Can I help you?

Johnny TURNS to face...

**OFFICER J. MASSEY**  
a man in his early thirties, crewcut; substantial physique straining against the confines of his police uniform. His name tag reads J. MASSEY.
JOHNNY
Officer, thank God you're here. There's a woman. She's going to need medical attention.

MASSEY
Going to need?

JOHNNY
She's going to have a baby. I don't think we have much time.

MASSEY
You a doctor?

JOHNNY
Uh, no, I'm not.

MASSEY
Then what are we talking about?

JOHNNY
If you could just get on your radio and call in a helicopter...

MASSEY
A helicopter? Alright, I've heard enough. You should go back to your...

JOHNNY
It could be a matter of life and death.

Massey considers the look in Johnny's eyes and slips behind the wheel of his cruiser.

JOHNNY
Thank you.

He picks up the handset. (NOTE: THERE SHOULD BE A LABEL SOMEWHERE THAT READS "UNIT 557").

MASSEY
Dispatch, this is Unit 557 requesting assistance... Over.

The speaker returns a volley of STATIC.

MASSEY
I repeat... This is Unit 557. Officer needs assistance. Over.

More STATIC. He regards Johnny.

(CONTINUED)
MASSEY
One of the transmission towers must be out.

JOHNNY
Out?

MASSEY
It's micro-wave. The signal drops offline sometimes when it gets too hot. It should be back up soon.

JOHNNY
You'll keep trying, right?

Johnny leans into the car, resting the palm of his hand on the doorframe. A blast of STATIC erupts from the speakers... WHOOSH!

EXT. DIRT ROAD - MORNING - VISION

Johnny has taken Officer Massey's place, wearing his uniform. Speaking into the same handset; standing alongside his parked cruiser. Just ahead... an old farm pickup; askew in a ditch.

OFFICER JOHNNY
Unit 557... I've got an abandoned pickup on Potters Road. Maine tags... Delta-Nancy-8-8-4.

DISPATCHER (O.S.)
Roger 557. Proceed with caution. Suspect is considered armed and dangerous.

OFFICER JOHNNY
Copy dispatch.

Officer Johnny drops the radio, replacing it with his service 9mm. He approaches the truck with caution, the powerful pistol leading the way...

JOHNNY'S POV - INSIDE OF THE CAB


BACK TO OFFICER JOHNNY

heading back to his cruiser, holstering his weapon. Back to the radio...

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

OFFICER JOHNNY
Dispatch, this is 557... all clear.
Suspect is gone. Contact CSU to
gather evidence. Over.

FOOTSTEPS from behind draw Johnny's attention. He TURNS...
A pipe swings through the air... our world goes BLACK!

RESUME SCENE

Johnny flashes out of the vision to more static.

MASSEY
I'll let you know when I make
contact. Until then, I suggest
you return to your vehicle.

On Johnny, considering what he just saw.

The police officer raises an eyebrow, studying him curiously.

MASSEY
There something else on your mind?

Off Johnny's hesitation, a long conflicted beat...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE
DISC JOCKEY (O.S.)
It's three o'clock in the east.
I'm Jammin' Jack with a prime
time news flash...

DISC JOCKEY (O.S.)
Police activity has a ten-mile
stretch of interstate ninety-five
completely shutdown. No word yet
on what's going on. For all you
unfortunate souls stuck out
there...
(sarcastic)
Happy fourth of July! This is
'The Boss' Bruce Springsteen...

As a HAND reaches in and kills the radio...

NEW ANGLE

Johnny and Bruce lean on the Murano's fender. Both down
to undershirts. Hot, sweaty and uncomfortable.

BRUCE
What did the cop say when you*
told him about the vision?*

JOHNNY
He looked at me like I was nuts.*
Can't really blame him. Why should
he believe a total stranger?

A beat.
JOHNNY
I'll try talkin' to him again later, right now we got bigger problems. I've asked around and you're the closet thing to a doctor we've got.

BRUCE
Me?

Bruce reacts; the pressure and heat getting to him.

BRUCE
I can't believe this! My last day on earth and I'm stuck out here in the middle of nowhere playing midwife to some Dead-head wannabes!

JOHNNY
Look, it's hot and it's uncomfortable, but you are not gonna' die today. Not if I can stop it.

A silent beat. Then...

BRUCE
Y'ever wonder if bad things happen for a reason? Like maybe there's a plan for each of us and when we mess with it, it throws the whole thing off balance.

JOHNNY
You mean, when I mess with it?
BRUCE
I just wonder if it has consequences we haven't considered.

JOHNNY
Trust me, I've considered them. Besides, if there is a cosmic plan, my dead zone must be a part of it, right?

Bruce nods, as...

JAKE (O.S.)
HEADS UP!

Johnny reacts, looking up just in time to catch an incoming football... WHOOSH!

EXT. CEMETERY - DAY - VISION

Lush rolling hills, a sprawling expanse dotted with headstones. Observer Johnny stands alongside a MIDDLE AGED COUPLE, the woman sobs; her husband doing his best to comfort her.

She kneels down at a grave marker, laying out a bouquet of flowers. Addressing the stone through tears...

MOURING WOMAN
It doesn't make sense. He was only eighteen. Nobody should die at eighteen.

Johnny comes around...

WHOOSH!

BACK TO JOHNNY

Bruce is watching him as he flashes out of the vision.

JOHNNY
(to himself)
July fourth... that's today.

JAKE

hovers by the Jeep, flanked by his friends; all staring at Johnny.

JAKE

Hey, mister! Little help!

JOHNNY

stares back at Jake. Bruce can tell there's something wrong.

BRUCE

What now?

JOHNNY

That kid is going to die today. I just saw his parents standing over his grave.

BRUCE

How?

JOHNNY

I don't know. But I'm starting to think we both should have stayed in the car.

With that he launches the football back.

Jake leaps for a perfect catch. Lateraling the ball to an unsuspecting friend. The football skims off his friend's fingertips, skittering end over end...

SLAMMING off the windshield of the white pickup.

CLOSE ON THE PASSENGER SIDE DOOR

as it opens... a few spent beer cans cascading out, as
Grim wobbles from the cab; clearly intoxicated. He picks the football up off the pavement.

   JAKE
   Sorry about that.

   GRIM
   This belong t'you?

   JAKE
   Yeah. Can I have it back?

   HANK
   Give the kid his football.

   GRIM
   Sure thing, little brother.

He pulls a significant hunting knife from his belt sheath, driving it mercilessly into the pigskin. HISS! He tosses the deflated ball back to Jake.

   GRIM
   Here ya' go.

   JAKE
   (angry)
   What's your problem?

Jake steps towards the big man holding the hunting knife.

   JOHNNY

   JOHNNY
   Oh, no.

He rushes in, intercepting Jake before he can reach Grim.

   JOHNNY
   Whoa! Take it easy!

   JAKE
   Guy just stabbed my football to death!

   GRIM
   Bring it on, college boy!

   JOHNNY
   It's not worth it, Jake. He's looking for a fight.
JAKE
(taken aback)
Who are you? How'd you know my name?

JOHNNY
Walk away and I'll explain. Please? Just walk away.

Jake hesitates, his anger waning. Grim watches them go; popping open a new brew.

GRIM
That's right! Go have yourself a nice cry... bitch!

BRUCE
Don't you think you've had enough to drink?

Grim turns to face him.

GRIM
What's it to you, bro?

BRUCE
Alcohol doesn't mix too well with the sun.

GRIM
Hear that, little brother? My new friend thinks I've had too much to drink.

HANK
He's right.

He regards Bruce with a look.

HANK
It's okay, I'll keep an eye on him.

Bruce starts away, when something catches his eye...

BRUCE
Son of a... it was you guys!

PICKUP'S FENDER
badly dented, scuffed with paint from the Murano.

(CONTINUED)
ANGER BURNING IN HIS EYES. APPROACHING HANK.

BRUCE
YOU SIDESWIPED MY CAR BACK AT THE TRUCK STOP.

BEFORE HANK CAN RESPOND, GRIM INTERCEDES.

GRIM
YOUR BEEF IS WITH ME. I WAS DRIVING.

BRUCE
THEN YOU'RE GONNA' PAY FOR THE REPAIRS.

GRIM
HELL I AM.

GRIM PUSHES BRUCE; HARD. BRUCE GATHERS HIMSELF, PUFFS HIS CHEST AND CHARGES...

NEW ANGLE

JOHNNY LEADS JAKE TO THE JEEP, LOOKING BACK; SHOCKED...

JOHNNY
(TO JAKE)
STAY HERE.

JOHNNY RUSHES BACK TO BRUCE'S SIDE, HELPING HIM UP.

JOHNNY
WHAT'S GOING ON?

BRUCE
THOSE JERKS SMASHED UP MY CAR.

GRIM
I'M GONNA SMASH MORE THAN THAT, YOU KEEP RUNNIN' THAT MOUTH!

BRUCE
BRING IT ON, JETHRO!
CONTINUED:

JOHNNY
Okay, it's over. There's nothing...

Bruce reacts.

BRUCE
John, look out!

Johnny turns... right into Grim's left hook. As it catches his chin... WHOOSH!

VISION
Grim, battered and bruised, stands over Hank's bloodied body; lying unconscious on a gurney, his face caked in blood; wearing the same plaid shirt. His body is loaded into the back of an ambulance. The doors slam shut to reveal Observer Johnny watching... WHOOSH!

RESUME SCENE - ON JOHNNY

as Grim's punch follows through; rocking his jaw. The street brawl continues around him; Bruce, Grim, Hank, and now Jake in the mix.

NEW ANGLE

As a police baton SLAMS down across the hood of Bruce's car, stealing everyone's attention.

REVEAL OFFICER MASSEY

glaring back at the combatants.

BRUCE
(wounded)
My car.

MASSEY
Next idiot throws a punch is gonna spend the afternoon locked in the back seat of my cruiser... with the windows up!

JAKE
(pointing at Grim)
He started it.

GRIM
That's garbage!

JAKE
You're garbage!

(CONTINUED)
Officer Massey slams his stick down again.

MASSEY
THAT'S ENOUGH!

Everyone goes quiet.

MASSEY
Traffic's going to start moving soon. Until then, I want everybody back to their cars... now!

One by one, people shuffle back to their vehicles; MUTTERING frustrations under their breath.

Massey turns away, as...

JOHNNY
Officer?

Massey keeps moving as Johnny catches up with him.

MASSEY
That includes you, Doctor.

JOHNNY
Doctor, that's funny. There's something happening here. People are going to get hurt. Some of them are going to die.

This brings Massey to a stop.

MASSEY
I checked on your pregnant girl. She's fine.

BRUCE
My friend knows things, Officer. You can call Sheriff Bannerman in Cleaves Mills.

MASSEY
Can't call anyone right now.

JOHNNY
Then you'll just have to trust me.

As Massey considers the problem, A WOMAN'S SCREAM breaks the silence.
JOHNNY
Nikki.

INT. RECREATIONAL VEHICLE - MOMENTS LATER

Bruce and Brian try to comfort a panting Nikki; suffering through painful contractions. Labor underway.

BRUCE
(checking his watch)
Contractions are fifteen minutes apart and getting stronger.

NIKKI
(panting, in discomfort and sweating)
Is that good?

BRUCE
Means you have time.

Bruce looks over his shoulder; heightened concern.

BRUCE
She's okay... for now.

REVEAL JOHNNY AND MASSEY
side by side, watching things unfold from the doorway.

MASSEY
How could you know this was going to happen?

Nikki interjects through the pain...

NIKKI
He's psychic!

Massey scoffs; a non-believer.

BRIAN
It's true. See for yourself...

He hands Massey a folder with some of Johnny's press clippings. Massey studies them, then...

MASSEY
Can I talk to you outside?
Massey leads Johnny out of prying earshot.

MASSEY
Maybe you are what you claim, or maybe you're just lucky.

JOHNNY
Lucky?

MASSEY
Woman's nine months along. Baby was bound to come out one of these days. I know how the con works... law of averages and such.

JOHNNY
It doesn't matter. The fact is we have to get that girl to a hospital.

Massey wavers. An uncertain beat.

MASSEY
I'll try my radio again. Anything changes, you let me know.

Massey notices something...

MASSEY
Better watch your step.

Massey walks away, as Johnny looks down...

HIS SNEAKER
smeared with a black substance; slick motor oil.

JOHNNY
leans down curiously, wiping some of the oil onto his bare finger... WHOOSH!

Johnny stands, now clad in an orange prison jumpsuit; Maine State Penitentiary stenciled across the chest.
30 CONTINUED:

He gasps for air, sweating profusely; concealed in a thicket of tall grass and heavy brush. Moonlight the only illumination. A beat of silence, then bloodhounds BAY in the distance; on his scent. Johnny reacts, darting off into the night...

31 FLASH!

Fugitive Johnny runs through an open field at dawn, repeatedly checking back over his shoulder. He reaches a post and rail fence, pausing to catch his breath...

JOHNNY'S POV

just beyond the fence, an old working farm. A beat up truck parked alongside a barn...

32 FLASH!

FARM TRUCK

the driver's door open. Johnny works beneath the dash, fiddling with the exposed wiring. A beat. The engine RUMBLES to life. Johnny sits upright, sporting a triumphant smile, until...

FARMER (O.S.)

Don't move!

Johnny reacts, going for the door handle...

NEW ANGLE

a pudgy FARMER levels an antiquated shotgun and fires. BANG!

JOHNNY

gets the door shut as the window explodes and races off. The Farmer chases his truck for a few steps, then trails off; exhausted.

33 INT. FARM TRUCK - VISION - CONTINUOUS

Johnny drives frantically, pedal pinned. He slowly looks down, grimacing in pain...

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

HIS HAND
comes away from his side, revealing a smear of blood.  He's been shot.  FLASH!

EXT. HIGHWAY - VISION - DAY
Observer Johnny, still in his prison orange, stands amidst a sea of gridlocked cars; present day.  WHOOSH!

RESUME SCENE ON JOHNNY
floored by the vision.  He takes off after Massey...

JOHNNY
Wait!

Again, Massey stops and turns.

MASSEY
What now?

JOHNNY
The traffic jam.  They're looking for an escaped convict.  That's why the road is shut down.  I'm right, aren't I?

Massey's expression changes.  He considers Johnny, then...

MASSEY
His name's Marvin Felps.  He broke out of the State Penitentiary late last night.

JOHNNY
How dangerous is he?

MASSEY
Extremely.

JOHNNY
He's here.

MASSEY
What?

JOHNNY
Felps... he's here with us.

Off Massey's reaction...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO
FADE IN:

THE SUN

burning brightly in a perfect, cloudless sky. Beating down; mercilessly.

DISC JOCKEY (O.S.)
Hour three and no end in sight for you tortured souls stranded out on interstate ninety-five. Jammin' Jack knows just how you feel.

A DASHBOARD

the vinyl baking away; discarded crayons melting in the heat; oozing off the dash...

DISC JOCKEY (O.S.)
Hang in there folks. Sweet relief is on the way... this is the Voodoo child himself, Mister Jimi Hendrix.

Someone slams the car door shut just as the music starts.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY

Johnny and Bruce WALK quickly past the parked car.

JOHNNY
The oil I stepped in must've dripped from whatever car Felps was riding in.

As they pass random PEOPLE, Bruce eyes them suspiciously.

BRUCE
Any idea what he looks like?

JOHNNY
No. But he's got a gunshot in his side.

(pointing)
Right here.

BRUCE
Then he shouldn't be hard to spot. What's the cop doing about it?

(CONTINUED)
JOHNNY
He's checking ID's. Making sure everyone's who they say they are.

BRUCE
This day just keeps getting weirder.

JOHNNY
(disturbed)
And the body count keeps rising.

BRUCE
You think it has something do with me... with what you saw happen to me?

Johnny considers the question, then...

BRIAN (O.S.)
Bruce! Mister Smith!

REVEAL Brian, he's frantic and scared.

BRIAN
Something's wrong with Nikki!

INT./EXT. RECREATIONAL VEHICLE - CONTINUOUS

A frantic Brian wipes the matted hair from Nikki's perspiration drenched forehead.

BRIAN
She just stopped talking.

BRUCE
It's burning hot in here.

BRIAN
The engine overheated. I had to turn it off.

Bruce places his hand on Nikki's forehead.

BRUCE
Nikki, can you hear me?

(CONTINUED)
Nikki's eyes ease open; distant.

NIKKI
Something's wrong with my baby.

BRUCE
The baby's fine. It's you. You're dehydrated.  
(to Brian)
You have anything to drink?

BRIAN
Just diet soda. We were gonna' stock up at the next rest stop.

BRUCE
No good. The sodium'll only make things worse. I need some...

He turns back to Johnny... but he's already gone.

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME TIME - MOVING WITH JOHNNY

as he weaves through cars, calling out...

JOHNNY
Water! We need water!

Most people turn away; ignoring his plea. The lead Biker stops Johnny, blocking his path. Serving up an intense glare, punctuated by a nasty scar on his leather cheek.

BIKER #1
What's the problem chief?

JOHNNY
There's a pregnant woman. She needs fluids.

The biker's snarl curls into a slight smile.

BIKER #1
(to his pals)
You heard the man. Let's find the lady some H2O.

The bikers immediately span out...

Banging on peoples windows; hitting them up for whatever they can spare.
NEW ANGLE

the lead Biker approaches a scrawny MAN sitting behind the wheel of his car, sipping from a bottle of water...

BIKER #1
You done with that?

MAN
No.

The biker yanks the bottle out of his hand.

BIKER #1
Now you are. Have a nice day.

NEW ANGLE - MOVING WITH JOHNNY

through cars and random motorists. He rounds an SUV, coming face to face with Hank. A tense beat.

JOHNNY
I don't want any trouble.

HANK
Grim's sleepin' it off. He's not a bad guy, just lets his temper get the best of him.

JOHNNY
Day hasn't been easy on anyone.

HANK
Tell your friend I'm sorry about his car. I'm good for the repairs.

JOHNNY
He'll appreciate that.

Hank retrieves the infamous cooler from the truck bed.

HANK
(offering it to Johnny)
Some ice. For the girl.

JOHNNY
Thanks.

Denise, the sunbather, approaches. Offering Johnny her spray bottle.

DENISE
It might help cool her off.
CONTINUED:

JOHNNY
Thanks.

The Young Boy and Girl with the sparklers step up next, presenting Johnny with two candy bars.

One by one, other motorists approach, offering whatever they can. Piling stuff into his hands...

BIKER #1 (O.S.)
Hey chief!

REVEAL THE BIKERS

each balancing a dozen or so bottles of water in their hands. Sporting tremendous grins.

BIKER #1
Somebody say they need a drink'a water?

INT. RECREATIONAL VEHICLE - CONTINUOUS

Bruce wipes a wet cloth across Nikki's forehead. Her condition has clearly worsened.

Bruce climbs out of the RV, joining Johnny.

BRUCE
Any sign of Felps?

JOHNNY
No. How's Nikki?

BRUCE
Burning up, which means the baby is, too. We have to get her temperature down.

JOHNNY
There's some ice.

BRUCE
It's not enough.

REVEAL THE LEAD BIKER

eavesdropping from the doorway.

BIKER #1
How about some rocky road?

(CONTINUED)
Johnny and Bruce share a slightly confused look.

EXT. HIGHWAY - ESTABLISHING

A refrigerated cube truck immobilized on the other side of the median; *Hendersons Home Made Ice Cream* stenciled on the side.

INT. ICE CREAM TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

The DRIVER sits in the cab, perusing an open newspaper. He looks up... alarmed by what he sees.

Johnny approaches on a direct intercept course; followed by a swarm of other motorists led by the Bikers.

EXT. ICE CREAM TRUCK - CONTINUOUS

The driver climbs down, meeting Johnny and his entourage.

```
DRIVER
(nervous)
What do you want?

JOHNNY
Your freezer still working?

DRIVER
Sure. It's got its own compressor.

JOHNNY
We need to put a woman in there.

DRIVER
Come again?

JOHNNY
She's pregnant. If we don't get her body temp down, her baby might be in danger.

DRIVER
Freezer's full. I can't account for the inventory, it'll mean my job.
```

Johnny looks around at the surrounding crowd; haggard faces. He reaches for his wallet, offering the driver his credit card...

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JOHNNY
You take plastic?
```

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

Off the driver's curious reaction.

NEW ANGLE - MOMENTS LATER

Two Bikers stand in the freezer tossing two-gallon drums of ice cream out to a huge jubilant crowd...

BIKER #1
Cherry vanilla? How 'bout rum raisin?

PAN OVER to the rear of the freezer compartment to FIND Nikki laying out across some cardboard boxes; a direct flow of cool air blowing across her body. Brian kneels at her side, holding her hand.

BRIAN
It's gonna' be okay, baby.

Bruce climbs out of the truck, joining Johnny.

BRUCE
Ten minutes in there and her body temp'll come right down.

JOHNNY
It's not going to stop the baby from coming.

BRUCE
No, but at least they have a chance.

JOHNNY
(overwhelmed)
What about you... and the rest of these people? How do I help them?

BRUCE
This all started with me, right?

JOHNNY
So?

BRUCE
So, go back to the beginning.

Bruce offers his hand. Johnny hesitates, reluctant.

BRUCE
I trust you.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

A beat. Johnny reaches out, making contact... WHOOSH!

MATCH, MOVE, MORPH...

Another section of highway. Observer Johnny stands amidst the aftermath of a multiple car pile-up... cars and trucks SMASHED and TWISTED. Smoldering, twisted metal. Survivors mill about in a daze. Johnny moves through, passing by familiar faces...

A battered Grim tries to free Hank's body from the overturned pickup...

Jake lies on the side of the road; thrown from the open Jeep...

Then Johnny SEES the Murano...

OBSERVER JOHNNY

Bruce!

He runs over to the crumpled car; it's torn open like a tin can...

INT. MURANO - CONTINUOUS - VISION

Bruce sits in the driver seat, gripping the wheel; his hazy gaze locked ahead. Johnny leans in through the open passenger side window.

OBSERVER JOHNNY

Bruce, hang in there. You gotta' fight.

Bruce slowly turns to him... a trickle of blood escapes the corner of his mouth. Two similar streams materialize from his nostrils. His eyes flicker as he eases back in the seat, taking a final strained breath as he passes away. Johnny takes it in; horrified. He TURNS and again sees the highway sign that reads, BAYVILLE ROAD EXIT... WHOOSH!

RESUME ON JOHNNY

clarity; the pieces falling into place.
JOHNNY
It's a pile-up.

BRUCE
What?

JOHNNY
Some kind of chain reaction accident.

BRUCE
How?

JOHNNY
I don't know.

A stream of people move past Johnny, slowly returning to their cars. He reacts with concern, stopping the Biker as he passes...

JOHNNY
What's going on?

BIKER #1
Radio's sayin' the highway's about to reopen. We're goin' home.

The Biker moves off. Bruce reads Johnny's concern.

BRUCE
Cops must've caught Felps.

JOHNNY
(decisive beat)
I have to find Massey. You start warning everyone. Keep them out of their cars as long as you can.

BRUCE
What do I tell them?

JOHNNY
How 'bout the truth?

Bruce hesitates at the suggestion, then relents and runs off.

JOHNNY
(calling out)
Bruce!

Bruce stops, looking back.
JOHNNY
Whatever you do... don't leave without me.

Bruce nods and takes off as Johnny considers his next move...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT THREE
DEAD ZONE: "Independence Day" - ACT FOUR - 6/20/05 - GOLD

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

49 EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY
Johnny approaches the police cruiser... no sign of Massey. He steps around to the rear of the car. Resting his open hand on the rear deck. WHOOSH!

49A VISION - PASSING THROUGH THE SHEET METAL
into the trunk compartment, to reveal AN UNCONSCIOUS MAN, tied and bound; in his boxers and undershirt. Dried blood on his forehead. FLASH!

49AA DIRT ROAD - MORNING - VISION
The Real Officer Massey (the unconscious man) speaks into his hand-held radio...

REAL MASSEY
Dispatch, this is 557... all clear. Suspect is gone. Contact CSU to gather evidence. Over.

FOOTSTEPS from behind draw his attention. He turns...

Felps, in his prison jumpsuit, strikes him across the head with a pipe. The Real Massey drops. FLASH!

49AB FROM INSIDE THE TRUNK - PITCH BLACK
The lid swings open, flooding the compartment with light. The Real Massey's bound and tied body (in boxers) is dropped in with a sickening THUD; obscuring our view. FLASH!

49AC DIRT ROAD - MOMENT LATER
Felps, wearing Massey's unbuttoned police shirt, grimaces as he wraps gauze around his gunshot wound. The Real Massey's MOANS and MUFFLED PROTESTS draw him back to the open trunk...

REAL MASSEY'S POV
Felps leans over him, glaring down; conjuring a sadistic grin.

He cocks back a clenched fist, unleashing a violent attack! *

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

PAN OVER to REVEAL Observer Johnny standing over Felps' shoulder; watching. Cringing at the brutality. FLASH!

INT. POLICE CRUISER - VISION

The rear passenger door flies open, dumping Massey into the back seat. He rights himself, pulling the door shut; yanking the gun from its holster, resting it on his leg in ready position. His breathing erratic, his skin pasty and pale; sweating profusely. Glancing down at his side, grimacing...

CLOSE ON MASSEY'S MIDSECTION

as he unbuttons the lower section of his shirt to reveal the blood soaked gauze; profuse bleeding. Substantial blood loss.

RESUME ON MASSEY - CLOSE

His eyes slip closed, then flutter open as he fights the impulse; hovering on the edge of consciousness. Finally succumbing as his eyes ease shut and he slumps over. WHOOSH!

RESUME SCENE - ON JOHNNY

reacting to the shocking ramifications of the vision.

EXT. ANOTHER SECTION OF HIGHWAY - SAME TIME

A steady stream of people file past Bruce, moving purposely. He bucks the current like a proverbial salmon. Trying futilely to get their attention...

BRUCE
Excuse me... Pardon me... Sir? Lady?

Nobody stops.

BRUCE
You can't go yet... Please, just listen... It's dangerous...

Bruce burns with uncertainty; this is hopeless.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - THROUGH A REAR SIDE WINDOW

Johnny peers in.

(CONTINUED)
51 CONTINUED:

REVERSE

Massey is lying across the back seat of the cruiser; unconscious. His gun tightly in hand, folded across his chest. A pool of blood has seeped through the fabric of his uniform.

JOHNNY

reacts; Massey is Felps.

He tries the driver's door... unlocked. He slips in.
Johnny eases into the driver's seat. He casts a look back at Massey, then goes for the car keys. They're not there. He turns his attention to the radio, fiddling with the dials... more STATIC. Something O.S. draws his attention...

Johnny
What the...

He reaches under the dash...

Closer
the radio's wiring harness has been disconnected.

Resume on Johnny
He reconnects the wiring, then sits back as we see the barrel of a pistol press against the nape of his neck.

Reveal Massey
glaring at him from behind.

Massey
I warned you.

Brian is behind the wheel. Bruce looks up through the window...

Bruce
Go straight to the emergency room. Don't stop for anything. And not too fast.

Brian
Will do.

Nikki
Thank you. For everything.

(Continued)
BRUCE

Good luck.

Bruce watches as the camper pulls away, the caravan of bikers trailing directly behind. The lead biker shoots Bruce a triumphant thumbs up as they pass...

INT. POLICE CRUISER - MOMENTS LATER

Johnny behind the wheel. Massey now riding shotgun, the pistol held low; trained on Johnny.

JOHNNY

Felps.

MASSEY

(sarcastic)

Wow, you really are psychic.

JOHNNY

The radio was never broken. You could've called for an ambulance at anytime.

MASSEY

Drawing police attention was not in my best interest.

JOHNNY

The real Massey is tied up in the trunk.

MASSEY

You should take your act on the road.

JOHNNY

Every law enforcement officer in the State is looking for you.

MASSEY

True. But now I have an insurance policy... a genuine clairvoyant. That's gotta' count for something.

Massey grimaces in pain, shifting uncomfortably. Holding his wounded midsection. Johnny takes note...

JOHNNY

You need a doctor.

Massey tightens his grip on the gun.
CONTINUED:

MASSEY
I need you to start this car and drive. Now!

Johnny starts the engine as we hear a cacophony of car HORNS...

EXT. HIGHWAY - SAME TIME

Bruce stands beside the Murano. (The other lanes have started to move.) The drivers trapped behind him lay on their horns.

BRUCE
Come on, Johnny, where the hell are you?

At that moment, the police cruiser slowly rolls past; Johnny behind the wheel.

EYE CONTACT

Bruce stares in disbelief as he and Johnny make eye contact as the police cruiser rolls past; what the hell is going on? Then something else catches his attention, drawing a stunned reaction...

BRUCE'S POV

Massey's drawn gun pointed at Johnny.

RESUME BRUCE

He looks around, then jumps in behind the wheel...the keys are gone.

BRUCE
He took my keys.

Then he suddenly remembers something and jumps out of the car and moves quickly to the front bumper. He reaches his hand up under the bumper and retrieves a spare key connected to a small magnet.

BRUCE
Looks like all those times I locked myself outt'a my car are gonna pay off.

He hesitates a half beat...
Johnny and Bruce.

JOHNNY
Whatever you do... don't leave without me.

RESUME BRUCE

Making a heroic decision to tempt fate and try and save his best friend, Bruce jumps in the car and starts the engine.

BRUCE
He'd do it for you.

He throws the car in gear and takes off.

EXT. HIGHWAY - DAY - HIGH ABOVE

as the free flowing traffic picks up speed. We FIND the police cruiser in the mix....

JOHNNY (O.S.)
Where are we going?
57 INT. POLICE CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Massey scans the horizon; pure desperation.

MASSEY
Let me worry about that.

JOHNNY
This isn't gonna' end well. I know, I've seen it.

MASSEY
Just keep that foot on the gas.

Johnny's eyes scan the horizon. His expression falls...

57A JOHNNY'S POV - HIGHWAY SIGN

It reads, BAYVILLE ROAD EXIT 1 Mile.

57B MEMORY FLASHBACK - BRUCE'S DEATH VISION

Observer Johnny looks back and sees the highway sign that reads, BAYVILLE ROAD EXIT.

57C RESUME JOHNNY

appealing to Massey with an impassioned urgency...

JOHNNY
There's going to be a bad accident. Innocent people are going to die... you can prevent it.

Massey lashes out, grabbing Johnny's arm; tight...

57D VISION

MASSEY
(resolute)
I can't go back to prison.

Johnny stares back him; utter disdain. Then his eyes shift beyond Massey, registering alarm.

JOHNNY
Bruce, no.

Massey takes note, turning...

(CONTINUED)
THROUGH THE PASSENGER WINDOW

Bruce races alongside in the Murano. Locked on them with a determined glare.

MASSEY

reacts; angered.

MASSEY

What the hell?

He jams the gun through his open window. Aiming at Bruce, he fires. BANG! BANG!

NEW ANGLE - THE MURANO

Bruce's window explodes in a hailstorm of projectile glass. One of the slugs catches him in the shoulder. He swerves hard, losing control of the car...

The Murano bucks wildly, spinning around to a jarring halt; across lanes. Blocking the road. Horns BLARE and tires SQUEAL with urgency, as fast approaching cars swerve past.

(NOTE: INCLUDE QUICK SHOTS OF FAMILIAR GRIDLOCK CARS TAKING EMERGENCY EVASIVE MANEUVERS; HANK, DENISE, ETC.)

INT. MURANO - CONTINUOUS

Bruce is slumped behind the wheel, wounded; confused. The tremendous roar of a HORN calls his attention...

BRUCE'S POV

A tractor trailer (or other large vehicle) barrels towards him, a violent tee-bone collision imminent. The massive truck grill seconds from impact... WHOOSH!

RESUME SCENE - INT. POLICE CRUISER - DAY

Johnny snaps back to reality; the accident was a vision. Massey is still gripping Johnny's arm.

(CONTINUED)
CONTINUED:

MASSEY
I can't go back to prison.

Johnny's eyes shift beyond Massey...

THROUGH THE PASSENGER WINDOW

Bruce races alongside in the Murano.

RESUME ON JOHNNY

a beat; the moment of truth.

JOHNNY
And I can't let this happen.

He reaches across his body, securing his seatbelt. Massey takes curious note, cocking the gun; jamming it at Johnny...

MASSEY
What are you doing?

A decisive beat.

JOHNNY
This!

Johnny slams hard on the brakes. The car jerks, thrusting the unbelted Massey into the dash; jarring the gun from his hand.

Bruce shoots past in the Murano, clearing the cruiser. Johnny yanks the wheel hard right...

EXT. POLICE CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

The car SCREECHES across three lanes, narrowly avoiding other traffic...

It smashes through a steel guardrail, careening over an embankment...

Bumping violently over uneven terrain. Soaring skyward into a violent barrel roll, finally SMASHING to a halt; upside down.

INT. POLICE CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Johnny leans back into FRAME; scratched and bruised but without serious injury.

(CONTINUED)
63 CONTINUED:

Massey lays prostrate through the side window, bloodied and immobile.

64 EXT. POLICE CRUISER - CONTINUOUS

Johnny crawls through the driver side door and stumbles quickly out of the car, still dazed.

Bruce's car skids to a stop on the shoulder of the highway. He jumps out and runs down the steep drop-off to where Johnny is sitting on the ground.
BRUCE
You okay?

JOHNNY
I think so.

BRUCE
That was crazy. You could have been killed.

JOHNNY
Better me than everybody else.

They watch as cars seem to move past them in a slow, safe manner.

JOHNNY
(suddenly remembers)
Massey.

Johnny hurries around to the now-open trunk REVEALING...

INSIDE THE TRUNK

the tied and bound REAL OFFICER MASSEY looks up at Johnny as he removes the duct tape from his mouth...

JOHNNY
Hang on, help's coming.

REAL MASSEY
(strained)
Thank you.

Johnny can finally relax a little bit, as...

TIME DISSOLVE TO:

65  EXT. HIGHWAY - LATER

An army of POLICE and EMERGENCY PERSONNEL have now arrived on scene.

Bruce and Johnny watch as Felps is handcuffed to a gurney and loaded into an ambulance.

Bruce checks his watch...

BRUCE
Y'know, if we hurry, we can still make it for the fireworks.

(CONTINUED)
JOHNNY
Okay, but I'm driving.

BRUCE
Whatever you say.

Bruce tosses him the 'safety' key.
A WALL CLOCK

It reads 11:45. We PAN DOWN to REVEAL a...

HOSPITAL WAITING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Johnny, bandaged and cleaned up; writes something on a piece of paper. Bruce paces back and forth, surrounded by a few other familiar faces from the traffic jam.

The lead Biker enters, balancing a stack of coffee cups on a tray as he rounds the corner...

BIKER #1
Who needs a jolt of hot Java?

As the others reach in for a cup, something just behind them catches Bruce's eye...

BRUCE
Brian?

REVEAL BRIAN

Standing in the doorway, cloaked in surgical scrubs; his face looks emotionally spent.

NEW ANGLE

the concerned crowd awaits his first words.

BRUCE
Well? What is it?

BRIAN
(big smile)
Twins! A boy and a girl!

They ALL CHEER; relieved laughter, hearty hugs and handshakes for the new father. We LINGER in the celebration, as...

BRUCE (V.O.)
It's hard to believe such a lousy day could end so great.

EXT. HOSPITAL PARKING LOT - MOMENTS LATER

The CAMERA FINDS Johnny and Bruce walking away from the hospital.

JOHNNY
It was one for the books.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)
JOHNNY (CONT'D)   
(remembering)   
Oh, that reminds me, I have something for you.

Johnny hands him a folded sheet of paper.

BRUCE   
What's this?

JOHNNY   
It's a list. My deepest, darkest secrets. Stuff I'd only want my very best friend to know. It might make things even between us.

They STOP at the end of the sidewalk leading to the parking lot. Bruce seems deeply touched by the gesture.

BRUCE   
John, you don't owe me anything, not after what happened today.

JOHNNY   
Does that mean you aren't going to read it?

BRUCE   
(amused)   
Not read it? Are you crazy? I'm gonna memorize it!

Bruce, having fun, starts off towards the car. Johnny quickly FOLLOWs.

JOHNNY   
Bruce?

BRUCE   
(screwing with him)   
Maybe I'll put it to music!

JOHNNY   
Alright, give it back.

BRUCE   
The Ballad of Johnny Smith!

JOHNNY   
I'm serious, hand it over.

BRUCE   
Could go platinum!

(CONTINUED)
JOHNNY
Alright, have your fun.

As they reach the car, Johnny pulls out the keys.

JOHNNY
Hey, I have another good idea.

BRUCE
(still laughing)
Yeah, what's that?

JOHNNY
Why don't you drive?

The smile suddenly falls away from Bruce's face.

BRUCE
(not so amused)
That's not funny.

Now it's Johnny's turn to rub it in. Bruce walks around to the passenger side.

JOHNNY
It's a little funny.

BRUCE
It's demented, that's what it is. Twisted!

They both get in the car.
EXT. MURANO - HIGH AND WIDE - CONTINUOUS

The car starts and backs out of its parking spot.

JOHNNY (V.O.)
Okay, then how about we just go home and pretend this day never happened?

BRUCE (V.O.)
That works for me.

A BEAT, then...

JOHNNY (V.O.)
You're sure you don't want to drive?

BRUCE (V.O.)
Turn on the damn radio!

JOHNNY (V.O.)
Have it your way.

We HEAR the car radio turned ON, as the car drives away...

DISC JOCKEY (O.S.)
Well, rock 'n' rollers, it's time for this fat cat to catch some z's. I'm Jammin' Jack wishing you and yours health and happiness. And remember, 'the love to take, is equal to the love you make.'

FADE TO BLACK.

DISC JOCKEY (O.S.)
These are the Beatles...

END CREDITS

THE END